



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Mail Code 401-07

P.O. Box 402

Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

TEL (609) 292-2885

FAX (609) 292-7695

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner

February 21, 2012

Dear Mayor:

As you may recall, last summer the State Forestry Services within the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) sent you a letter detailing the southern pine beetle (SPB) infestation in New Jersey. I am writing today to provide an update on suppression efforts and best management practices, and to emphasize the critical need for coordination between and among various levels of government and residents to make suppression efforts successful. This is a priority issue for the DEP and we need the assistance of your municipality.

First and foremost, the Christie Administration is pleased to announce a new grant and cost-share program for SPB suppression. Funding is available both to residents and to county and local governments through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

The State Forestry Services administers two additional southern pine beetle grant opportunities: Property owners enrolled in the State's Forest Stewardship Program are eligible for cost-share funds to suppress active SPB infestations on their property, and municipal grants are available for suppression within your municipal boundaries. For more information on these grants visit www.southernpinebeetle.nj.gov, or call (609) 292-2532.

While the grants and cost-share programs will provide the necessary financial resources, we all must work to communicate efficiently among levels of government and with residents. This is vital for effective SPB suppression. To that end, I am asking each municipality to designate a SPB liaison for coordinating suppression information with the State Forestry Services.

State foresters conduct weekly aerial surveys in order to detect new infestations. If a new infestation is detected within a municipality, the State foresters will contact your designated municipal liaison with the outbreak location and recommended suppression action. Swift removal of infested trees and a buffer of uninfested trees within 14-21 days of detection is required to suppress the outbreak.

To date, 110 municipalities across southern New Jersey have designated liaisons. **If your municipality has not designated a contact, please complete the attached form to ensure you receive timely notifications of active infestations within your municipality.**

In order to expedite efforts, DEP has been working with the Pinelands Commission to establish an efficient permitting process for SPB suppression on State-owned and Pinelands Preservation Area land. In order to expedite the process at a municipal level, please ensure that your local permitting process is also streamlined so property owners can take quick action. Acting just a few days earlier may save hundreds of trees. Please contact the State Forestry Services for recommendations on how to expedite the permitting process.

Education is a key component for SPB suppression. To assist with public outreach, please visit www.southernpinebeetle.nj.gov and download the Southern Pine Beetle Municipal Tool Kit. This tool kit provides the most current and scientifically reviewed southern pine beetle information. It contains materials for your use in public outreach and awareness programs in your municipality, including a complete PowerPoint presentation with talking points for your Shade Tree Commission to present to residents.

If you have any questions regarding grant opportunities, designating a SPB liaison, expediting your town's permitting process or the tool kit, visit our website at www.southernpinebeetle.nj.gov or contact the State Forestry Services at (609) 292-2532.

Thank you for your cooperation. Working together, we can control southern pine beetle outbreaks and protect New Jersey's pine forests.

Sincerely,

Bob Martin
Commissioner